

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 SAM-01 CU-04 DRC-01

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R 310711Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2304

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 765

E.O. 111652: GDS

TAGS: PINT KS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT WARNS AGAINST STUDENT PROTEST

1. DURING ROUTINE ANNUAL INSPECTION OF MINISTRY OF EDUCATION JANUARY 29, PRESIDENT PARK LECTURED MINISTRY OFFICIALS AT LENGTH ABOUT PREVENTING STUDENT PROTEST AND CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE "EAGER MAJORITY" CAN CONCENTRATE ON STUDY. HE ADDED THAT STUDENTS WHO REFUSED TO TAKE EXAMS SHOULD BE HELD BACK OR EXPELLED.

2. EDUCATION MINISTER MIN KWAN-SIK PRIVATELY TOLD USAID EDUCATION OFFICER THAT IN MAKING HIS PLEA FOR DISCIPLINE PRESIDENT PARK HAD DECLARED HE WOULD NOT HESITATE TO DISSOLVE ANY INSTITUTION IF ITS STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED OFF CAMPUS. MIN ADDED THAT PRESIDENT MADE NO SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT ABOUT MINISTRY OF EDUCATION'S PROGRAMS FOR THE YEAR, THE PURPOSE OF THE INSPECTION. INSTEAD PARK AIMED ALL HIS REMARKS IN
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EMOTIONAL TERMS AT PROBLEM OF STUDENT PROTEST.

3. NEWSPAPERS GAVE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO PRESIDENT'S REMARKS, BUT OMITTTED REFERENCE TO THREAT TO DISSOLVE SCHOOLS WHOSE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE. PRESS DID REPORT THAT PRESIDENT INSTRUCTED EDUCATION MINISTER TO CONVENE A MEETING OF UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS "TO CONVEY HIS MESSAGE TO THEM CLEARLY."

4. ANOTHER MOE OFFICIAL WHO WAS PRESENT AT INSPECTION INDEPENDENTLY CONFIRMED THAT PRESIDENT HAD THREATENED TO DISSOLVE SCHOOLS WHOSE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE OFF CAMPUS.

5. COMMENT: PRESIDENT'S REMARKS CLEARLY REFLECTED INTENTION TO PUT HEAVY PRESSURE ON COLLEGE ADMINSTRATORS AND FACULTY TO BLOCK STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS.

6. PARK'S THREAT TO DISSOLVE SCHOOLS WHOSSE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE POSES PARTICULAR THREAT FOR PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR FACULTIES. THESE SCHOOLS DEPEND ON STUDENT TUITION FEES TO MEET EXPENSES AND FACULTY SALARIES. THEY WOULD BE BADLY AFFECTED BY CLOSURE OR SUSPENSION OF SIGNIFICANT LENGTH.
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